

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

1. (Currently Amended) A communication method comprising:
  - providing a user profile having a collection of properties related to a user email folder, the user profile further having a collection of properties related to a user instant messaging (IM) account;
  - defining properties of the user email folder using the user profile;
  - defining properties of the user IM account using the user profile, wherein a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access; and
  - providing at least one interface for displaying the user profile, including the defined properties of the user email folder and the defined properties of the user IM account,
    - wherein the interface is further configured to provide at least one group email message corresponding to at least one group email folder, the group email folder configured such that members of a group associated with the group email folder have access to the group email message,
    - wherein the interface is further configured to provide an option to provide at least one user-specific email, the user-specific email being different than the group email message,
    - wherein the group email message includes an access indicator for each member of the group, the access indicator configured to indicate which members of the group have accessed the group email message,
    - wherein the access indicator comprises one of an extensible markup language (XML) tag or a hypertext markup language (HTML) tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message,
  - wherein both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information, and

wherein all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing the user profiles comprises:

- assigning a user profile to a user;
- permitting the user assigned to the user profile to have access to the at least one user email folder associated with the user profile; and
- permitting the user assigned to the user profile to have access to the at least one group email folder.

3. (Currently Amended) A communication method comprising:
- assigning a user profile to a user;
  - associating a user email folder with the user profile;
  - associating a user instant messaging (IM) account with the user profile;
  - defining properties associated with the user IM account as a function of the user profile wherein a user type associated with the user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access; and
- providing at least one interface for displaying the user profile, including the defined properties of the user email folder and the defined properties of the user IM account,
- wherein the interface is further configured to provide at least one group email message corresponding to at least one group email folder, the group email folder configured such that members of a group associated with the group email folder have access to the group email message,
- wherein the interface is further configured to provide an option to provide at least one user-specific email, the user-specific email being different than the group email message,
- wherein the group email message includes an access indicator for each member of the group, the access indicator configured to indicate which members of the group have accessed the group email message,
- wherein the access indicator comprises one of an extensible markup language (XML) tag or a hypertext markup language (HTML) tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message,
- wherein both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information, and
- wherein all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, further comprising:  
defining properties associated with the user email folder as a function of the user profile.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises:  
assigning a user name associated with the user; and  
assigning a password associated with the user name.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises:  
assigning a user type associated with the user.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises:  
assigning a collection of email folders to the user.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein assigning the collection of email folders to the user comprises:  
storing post office protocol 3 (POP3) server information for each email folder in the collection of email folders.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein assigning the collection of email folders to the user comprises:  
storing simple mail transfer protocol (SMTP) server information for each email folder in the collection of email folders.
10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises:  
storing email filter settings.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises:  
storing an addressbook associated with the user.
12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein storing the addressbook associated with the user comprises:  
assigning addressbook settings to the addressbook.
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein defining properties associated with the user ~~IM~~ IM account comprises:  
assigning a user name associated with the user; and  
assigning a password associated with the user name.
15. (Cancelled)
16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein defining properties associated with the user IM account comprises:  
assigning a collection of IM accounts to the user.
17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein defining properties associated with the user IM account comprises:  
storing a contact list associated with the user.

18. (Currently Amended) A communication system comprising:
- an Internet Service Provider (ISP) configured to provide:
    - a user profile;
    - a user email folder associated with the user profile;
    - a user instant messaging (IM) account associated with the user profile, wherein a user type associated with the user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access; and
  - an interface for displaying the user profile, including the defined properties of the user email folder and the defined properties of the user IM account;
    - wherein the interface is further configured to provide at least one group email message corresponding to at least one group email folder, the group email folder configured such that members of a group associated with the group email folder have access to the group email message,
    - wherein the interface is further configured to provide an option to provide at least one user-specific email, the user-specific email being different than the group email message, and
    - wherein the group email message includes an access indicator for each member of the group, the access indicator configured to indicate which members of the group have accessed the group email message,
      - wherein the access indicator comprises one of an extensible markup language (XML) tag or a hypertext markup language (HTML) tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message,
  - wherein both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information, and
  - wherein all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database.

19. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the user profile is configured to define properties associated with the user email folder.

20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19, wherein the properties associated with the user email folder include at least one property selected from the group consisting of:

- a user name;
- a password;
- post office protocol 3 (POP3) server information;
- simple mail transfer protocol (SMTP) server information; a collection of email folders;
- a user type; and
- an email filter setting.

21. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the user profile is configured to define properties associated with the user IM account.

22. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the properties associated with the user IM account include at least one property selected from the group consisting of:

- a user name; a password;
- a collection of IM accounts; and
- a contact list.